

South Dakota MILK PRODUCTION

News Release

April 17, 2003

JANUARY - MARCH 2003 MILK PRODUCTION DOWN

SIOUX FALLS, April 17, 2003 – The January - March 2003 quarterly milk production for South Dakota totaled 352 million pounds, 3 percent below last year, according to USDA's South Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service. Fewer milk cows are the primary reason for the lower production.

During the first quarter of 2003, the average number of milk cows, at 93,000, is down 4,000 head from last year. This is down 2,000 head from last quarter and is the lowest number for the first quarter for South Dakota's dairy herd since the high of 611,000 head in January - March, 1934.

During 2002, the number of milk cows averaged 96,000, down 3,000 head from the previous year. This is the lowest annual average since the records began in 1930. Milk produced per cow averaged 14,625 pounds, down from 15,960 pounds in 2001. Total milk produced in 2002, at 1,404 million pounds, was down 11 percent from 2001.

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